

Plateau PC Users Group

 Microsoft | Microsoft 365 OneDrive



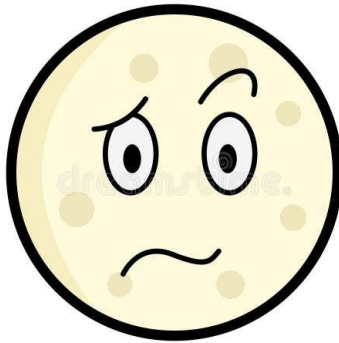
Refresher with Optional Removal

Presented By
George Sengstock

August, 2026



Why Are We Talking about this Again?



I have had a recent surge in questions from members having issues with their computer being slow or “losing their files”.

There is still much confusion of what Microsoft 365 and OneDrive are and how they affect you.



Plateau PC Users Group

See Also Presentation

"Cloud Storage"

[Presentation \(.pdf\)](#)

March, 2024

George Sengstock



Microsoft 365 Subscriptions

Microsoft 365

Free

- For 1 person
- 5 GB of cloud storage
- 15 GB of mailbox storage
- Works on Windows, macOS, iOS, and Android™
- OneDrive photo and file backup across your devices
- Outlook.com email and calendar
- Web and mobile versions only of Word, Excel, PowerPoint, OneNote, etc.

Microsoft 365 Basic

\$19.99/year

Subscription automatically renews unless canceled in Microsoft account.

- For 1 person
- Use on multiple devices at the same time
- Works on PC, Mac, iPhone, iPad, and Android phones and tablets
- 100 GB of secure cloud storage
- 100 GB of mailbox storage
- Secure storage and ransomware protection for your photos and files
- Ad-free secure Outlook web and mobile email and calendar
- Advanced email security features
- Ongoing support
- Web and mobile versions only of Word, Excel, PowerPoint, OneNote, etc.



Microsoft 365 Subscriptions

Microsoft 365 Personal

\$99.99 /year

Subscription automatically renews unless canceled in Microsoft account.

○For 1 person

- Use on up to five devices simultaneously
- Works on PC, Mac, iPhone, iPad, and Android phones and tablets
- 1 TB (1000 GB) of secure cloud storage
- Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, and OneNote desktop apps with Microsoft Copilot
- Higher usage limits than free for select Copilot features
- Higher usage for AI image creation in Copilot
- Microsoft Defender advanced security for your identity, personal data, and devices
- OneDrive ransomware protection for your photos and files
- Microsoft Teams with calls up to 30 hours and meetings up to 300 people
- Ongoing support for help when you need it

Microsoft 365 Family

\$129.99 /year

Subscription automatically renews unless canceled in Microsoft account.

○For 1 to 6 people

- Each person can use on up to 5 devices simultaneously
- Works on PC, Mac, iPhone, iPad, and Android phones and tablets
- Up to 6 TB of secure cloud storage (1 TB per person)
- Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, and OneNote desktop apps with Microsoft Copilot
- Higher usage limits than free for select Copilot features
- Higher usage for AI image creation in Copilot
- Microsoft Defender advanced security for your family's identity, personal data, and devices
- OneDrive ransomware protection for your family's photos and files
- Microsoft Teams with calls up to 30 hours and meetings up to 300 people
- Ongoing support for help when you and your family need it

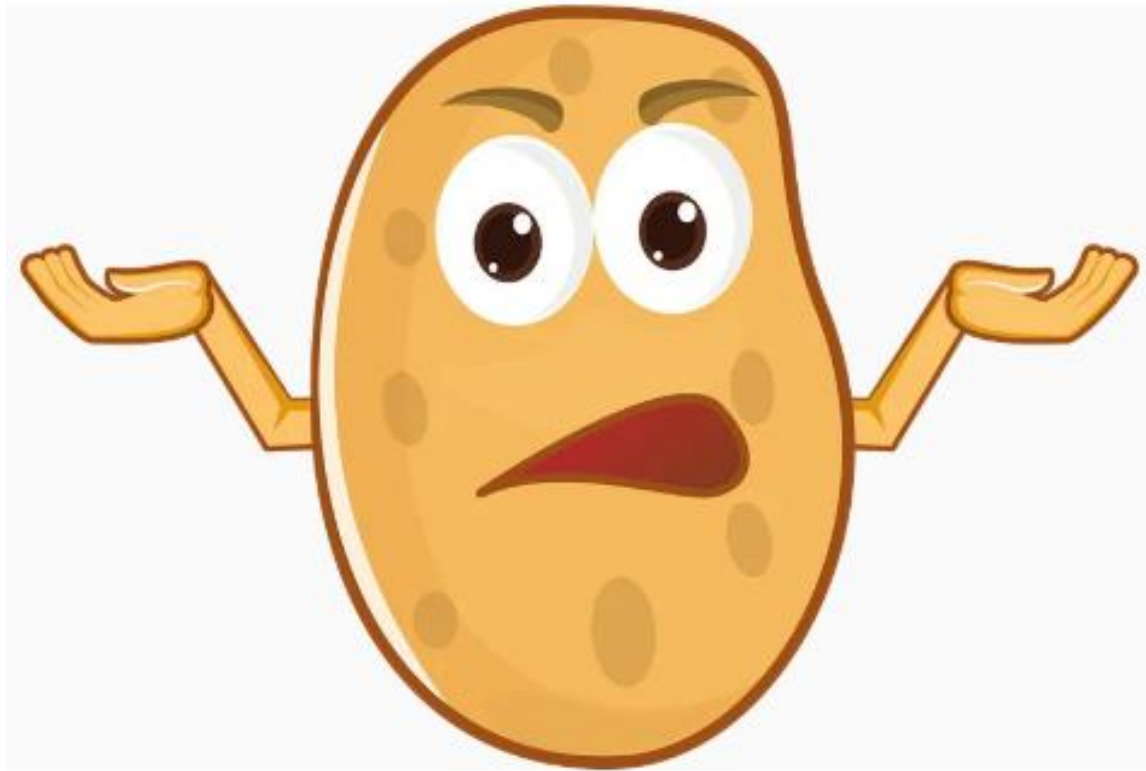


Microsoft 365 “Offline vs. Online”

Microsoft 365 subscription versions (such as Microsoft 365 Personal, Family, and Business plans) allow offline editing using the installed **desktop applications** (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, OneNote, and Outlook). These subscriptions require an internet connection at least **every 30 days** to validate the license; if not connected, the apps switch to read-only mode.

Microsoft 365 Online (web-only) versions **do not allow offline editing**, as they are designed to run exclusively in a browser with cloud storage.

Not What I was Asking For!!!



What Are They Hiding?



Which Microsoft 365 versions are web only?

Microsoft 365 Free: Provides **only web versions** of Word, Excel, and PowerPoint, along with 5 GB of OneDrive storage.

Microsoft 365 Basic: A paid subscription that includes **only web** and mobile versions of Office apps, with no desktop install capability.

There is an array of business and educational plans not shown here.

Plans such as **Microsoft 365**

Personal, Family, Premium, Business Standard, Business

Premium, E3, E5, and Education A3/A5 **include full**

desktop application installations.

Microsoft 365 Decoder Ring

“Web Only” = Online

Online Editing Only, internet required

“Desktop Apps” = Offline

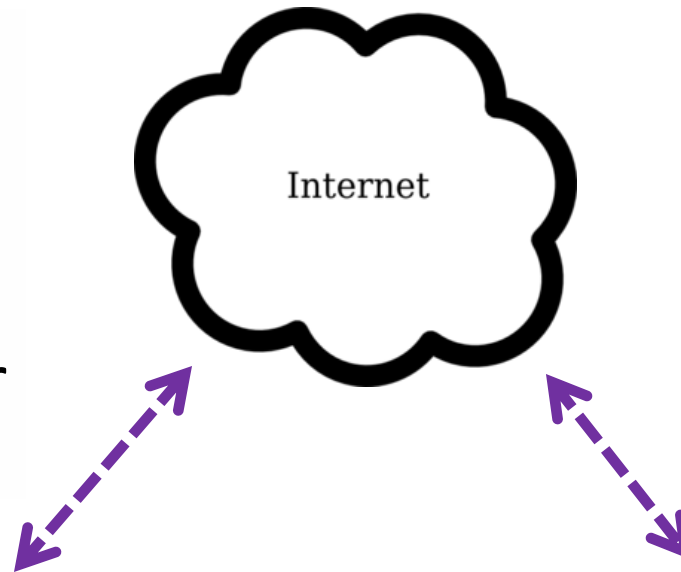
**Edit Local Files like the old days,
internet not required**

**= Microsoft 365 Personal \$99.99/year
(at a minimum)**

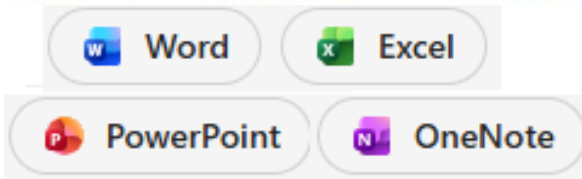
Microsoft 365

Online Mode

The files and apps are on corporate server



Your computer is functioning as a browser

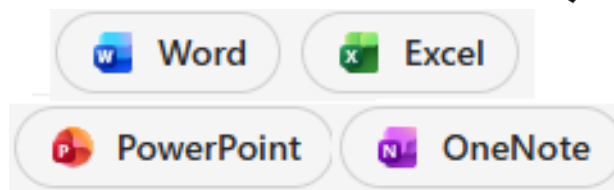


Microsoft 365

Offline Mode

Your computer is
functioning as an actual
PC!

Files and the apps are
stored locally.



Reality Check

If you are using Windows 11 you are using Microsoft 365 by default. The degree of infiltration depends on what you (or whoever) did during the Windows 11 first time startup.

Microsoft has made the process more and more sneaky.



I THOUGHT WE
WERE TALKING
ABOUT THAT
ONEDRIVE THING

...

Capisce ?



MICROSOFT 365 IS ONEDRIVE



By the way, the gabagoons
stole your files too.



Let's talk about that boss

OneDrive is primarily cloud storage.

Basic features include sharing and simultaneous editing of selected files with multiple people.

However, there are additional features you may or may not want:

- **Cloud storage > 5GB**
- **Automatic file synchronization**
(falsely called “backup”)



Cloud Storage Upsize

5GB is enough if you only use cloud storage to share a moderate number of files. If you will be sharing large files or foolishly storing everything in the cloud, then you will need a paid plan.

Microsoft 365 Basic 100 GB \$19.99/year

Microsoft 365 Personal 1 TB \$99.99/year

Storage

0.3 GB used of 5 GB (6%)



When viewing OneDrive, the amount of storage used vs. available is indicated in the lower left.

Automatic File Synchronization

(falsely called “backup”)

If you recently got a new PC or upgraded to Windows 11 and weren't paying attention you are likely sharing all your files with Microsoft. This was activated under the guise of providing “backup” for all your “valuable files”.

Use this feature correctly or not at all.

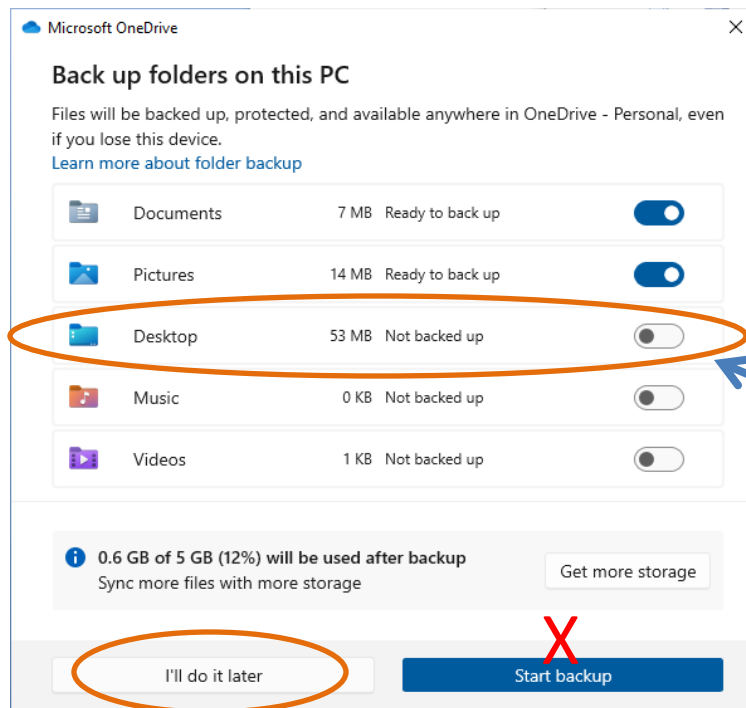


Microsoft OneDrive

Initial Setup



OneDrive links a local folder on your PC to the Cloud Server folder for your account



By default, MicroSoft wants to steal your desktop!

Please turn this off!

Don't do it!



The same association occurs when using the mobile device App but the level of control you have is more limited.

That's Not A Backup!



Automatic File Synchronization

Factors that affect performance

- Too many files
- “Backup” of Desktop active
- Your tree roots are too deep
- Computer isn’t used a lot (or old),
updates overwhelm it
- Multiple devices syncing
- Poor internet connection



In some cases I’ve seen the OneDrive Service stop for no apparent reason!

Automatic File Synchronization

My Advice

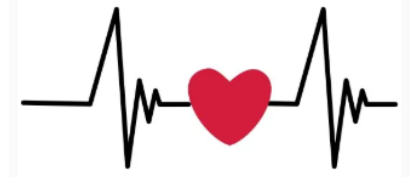
- Turn Off all the “Backup” folder options
- Restore the folders back to their defaults!

Shown in removal process

- If you still want to use synchronized folders use the default Onedrive folder and/or make specific folders for this purpose.
- Never store sensitive docs in the cloud!



Pulse Check



I'm so confused.

I am questioning my
existence in the Universe.



BORING! Why do I care?



Nuke Microsoft!

ARRGH!



Prepare for enlightenment

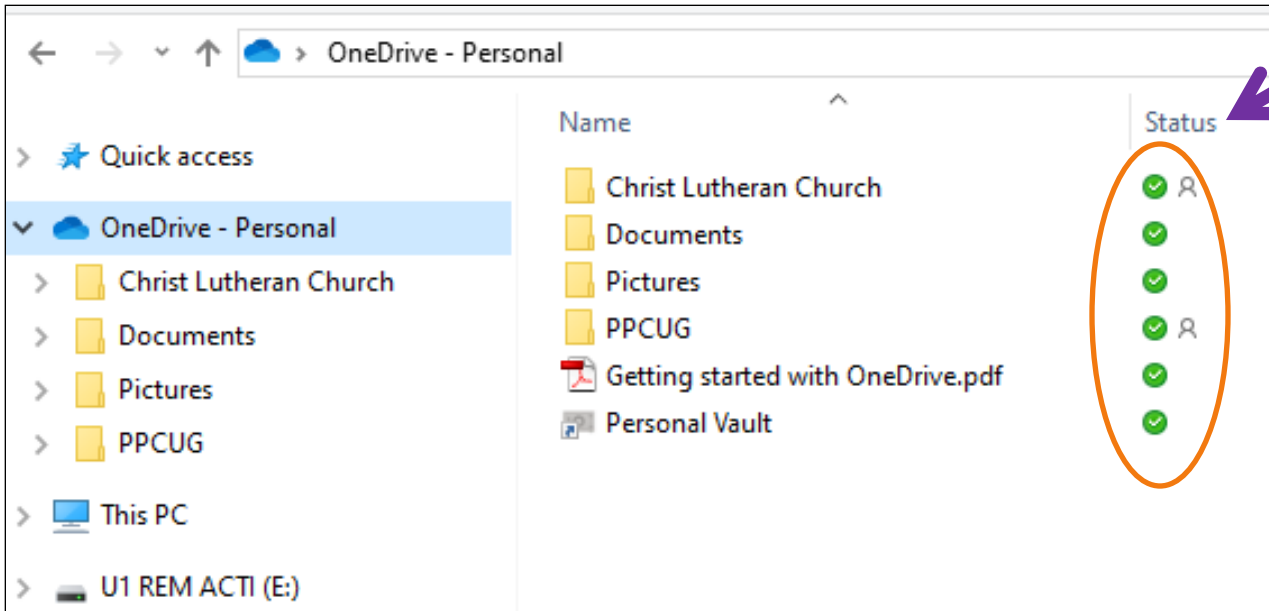


Time to wake up



We'll get to that shortly

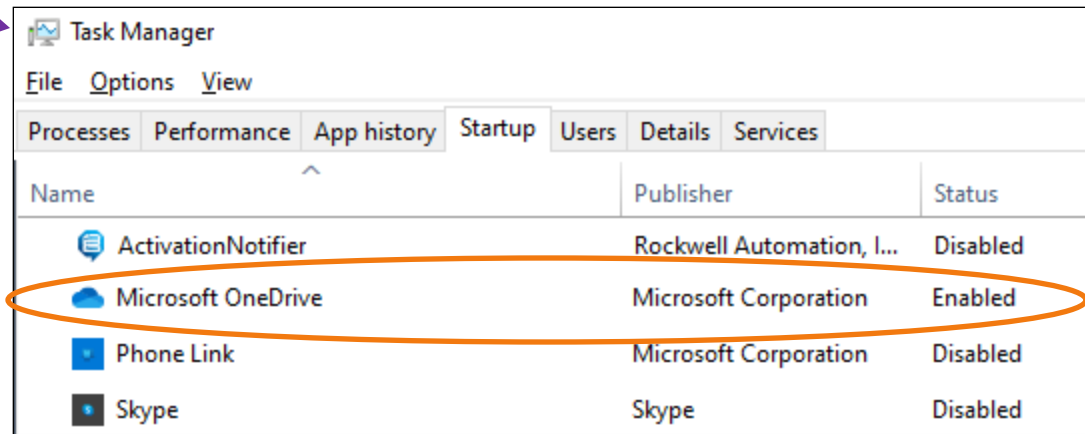
Am I Actually Running OneDrive?



The OneDrive Folder(s) include a Status column in file explorer. If it does not appear, OneDrive Synchronization is not active!



Check to see if the Microsoft OneDrive service is running in Task Manager.



Do You Know Where Your Files are Soldier !?!?



I bet you don't



“My Computer?”

The whole “My” trend was started to hide the fact that you no longer in control of your so-called

“Personal Computer”

Time to take it back!



“My Documents?”

The “My...” folders are just aliases

C:\Users\{username}\Documents

{username} used to be your Windows login name.
Now to confuse even further, Win 11 often uses a
pseudonym so “GeoLogic” became “geolo”
resulting in:

C:\Users\geolo\Documents



And Similarly

C:\Users\{username}\Desktop

C:\Users\{username}\OneDrive

C:\Users\{username}\Pictures

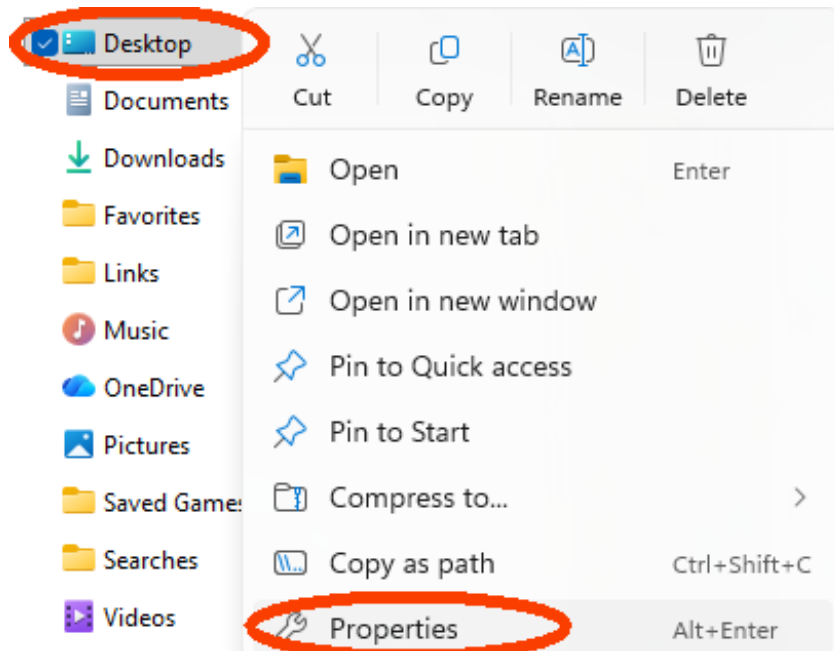
C:\Users\{username}\Videos

Etc.

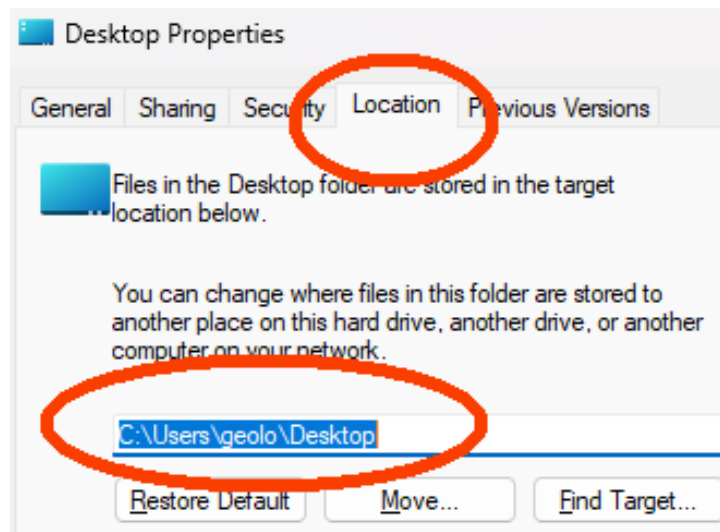
OK. I think I'm getting it
but what makes this
different than 5 years ago?



The Alias Scheme is Revealed!



- Right-Click the folder
- Properties
- Location Tab



OneDrive Hijacking

You Might Also Have

C:\Users\{username}\OneDrive\Desktop

C:\Users\{username}\OneDrive\Pictures

C:\Users\{username}\OneDrive\Videos

A majority of new Win 11
installs end up this way
and the owner doesn't
even know it!



“Are We There Yet”

To restore your Windows system folders (like Desktop, Documents, and Pictures) from OneDrive back to their original local paths, stop the OneDrive folder backup feature and use the default location settings.



Is It My Turn!

Nuke OneDrive

Open OneDrive settings from your system tray, go to the **Sync and backup** tab, and click **Manage backup**.

Turn off the toggle for all the folders (Desktop, Documents, or Pictures).

The image shows two overlapping windows. The top window is the 'OneDrive Settings' application, specifically the 'Sync and backup' tab. It features a sidebar with 'Sync and backup', 'Account', 'Notifications', and 'About'. The main content area has a section titled 'Back up important PC folders to OneDrive' with a 'Manage backup' button circled in orange. Below this are sections for 'Save photos and videos from devices', 'Save screenshots I capture to OneDrive', and 'Import cloud photos and files'. The bottom window is the 'Microsoft OneDrive' application. It displays 'Back up folders on this PC' with a list of folders and their backup status. The 'Documents', 'Pictures', and 'Desktop' folders are marked as 'Ready to back up' and have blue toggle switches circled in orange. The 'Music' and 'Videos' folders are marked as 'Not backed up' and have greyed-out toggle switches. Red exclamation marks are placed next to the 'Desktop' folder in the list.

OneDrive Settings - Sync and backup

Back up important PC folders to OneDrive
Back up your Desktop, Documents, and Pictures folders to OneDrive, so they're protected and available on other devices.
[Learn more](#)

Manage backup

Microsoft OneDrive - Back up folders on this PC

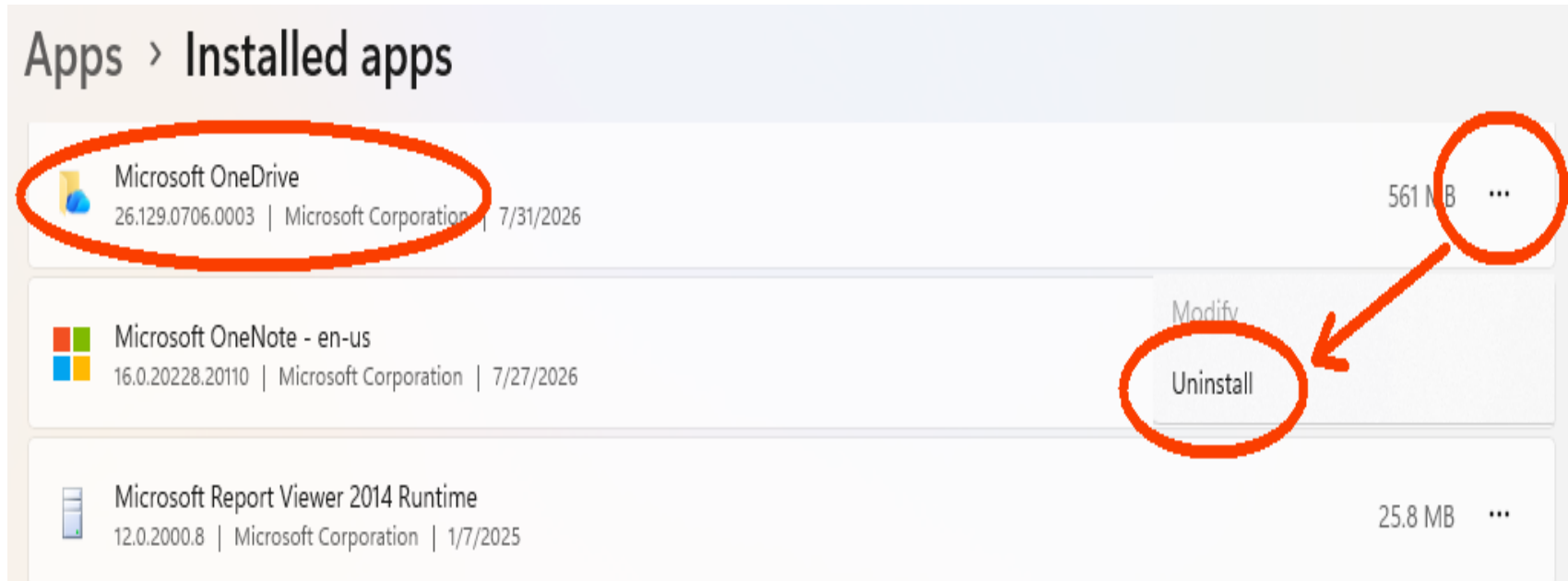
Files will be backed up, protected, and available anywhere in OneDrive - Personal, even if you lose this device.
[Learn more about folder backup](#)

Folder	Size	Status	Toggle
Documents	113 KB	Ready to back up	On
Pictures	896 KB	Ready to back up	On
Desktop	13.9 GB	Ready to back up	On
Music	1 KB	Not backed up	Off
Videos	1 KB	Not backed up	Off

The Final Step

Choose the option **This computer only** when prompted to move files back to your local PC.

If paths remain redirected, open File Explorer, right-click the folder (e.g., Documents), select **Properties**, go to the **Location** tab, and click **Restore Default**.



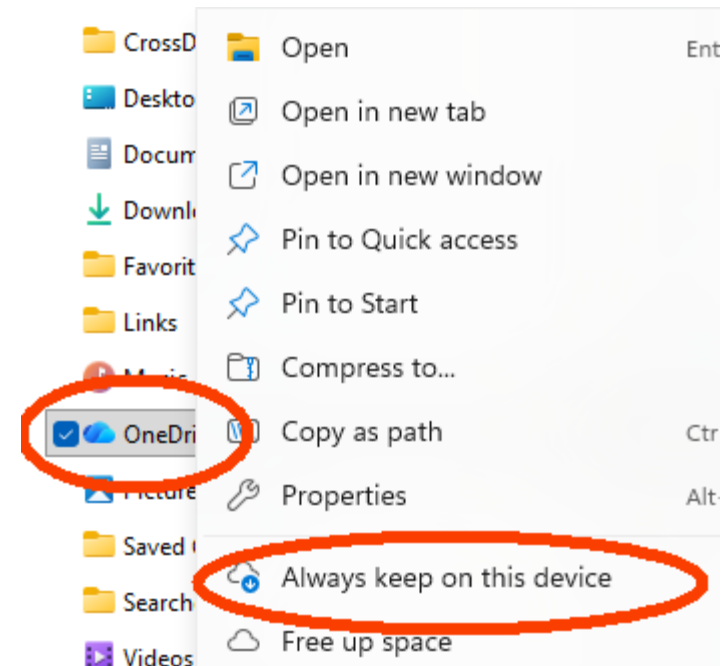
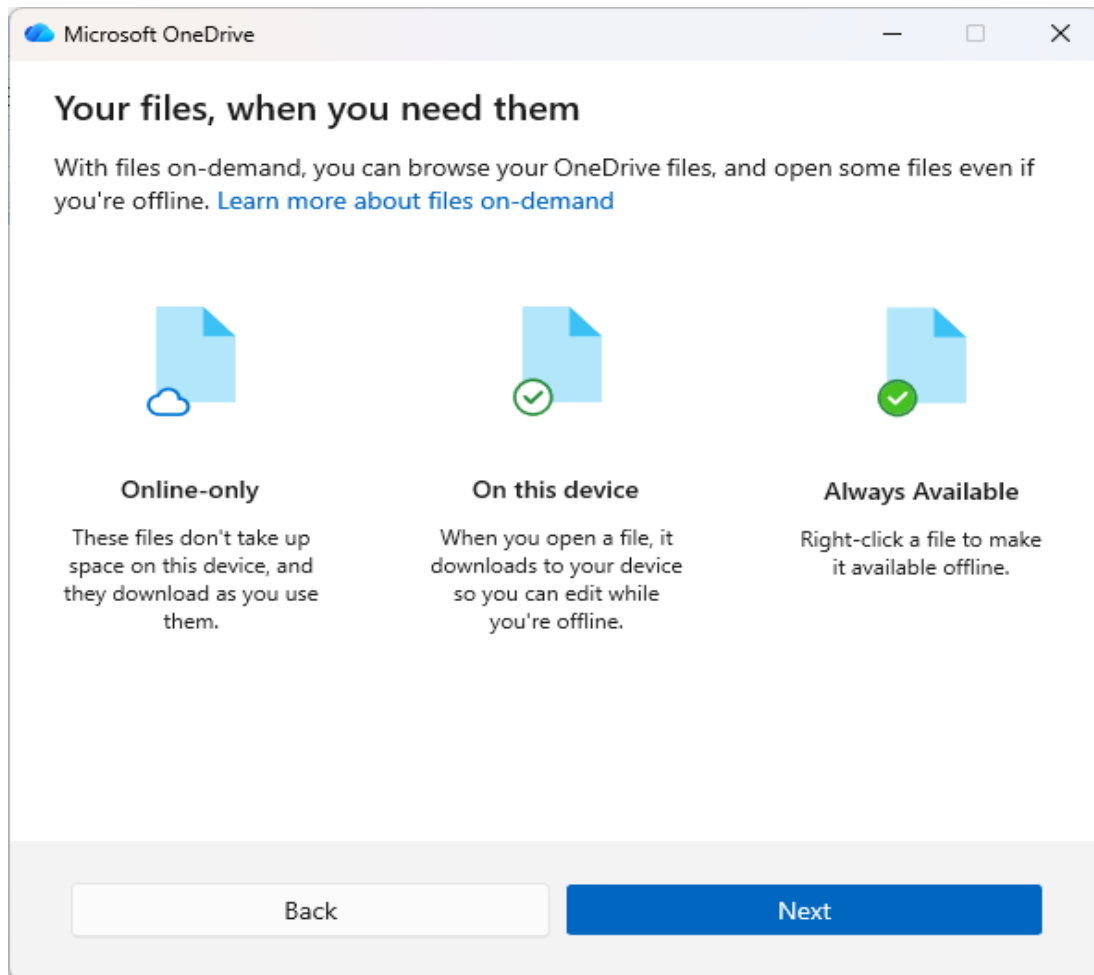
In Conclusion

- Know where your files really are
- Have a physical backup plan, do not use cloud
- Use Cloud storage for collaborative projects
- Use an old (ancient) MS Office version*
- Consider 3rd party alternatives:
 - ✓ LibreOffice
 - ✓ WPS Office
 - ✓ Google Workspace



And Finally

If OneDrive synchronization is working for you, be sure to make your primary computer the “master”.



And Finally

The capability to add a folder that resides outside the designated OneDrive folder seems to have been removed recently. Create a Symlink or using 3rd party tools.

Symbolic links can trick OneDrive into recognizing external folders as part of its sync directory, without physically moving data.

Windows 10 or later Open Command Prompt as Administrator.

```
mklink /D "C:\Users\OneDriveTargetFolder" "D:\PathToSourceFolder"
```

Replace the paths with your actual folder locations.

Example: `mklink /D "C:\Users\JohnDoe\OneDrive\ExternalProject"`
`"D:\ExternalProject"`

Popular Third-Party Sync Tools:

rclone: A command-line program allowing synchronization between local folders and cloud services, including OneDrive.

GoodSync: GUI-based application supporting syncing external folders with OneDrive.

CarotDAV: A webDAV solution compatible with OneDrive, enabling custom folder syncs.



Roundtable Discussion

